

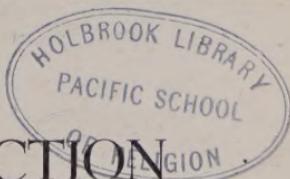
# SOCIAL ACTION

MAY 15, 1945



Adventures in

RURAL COMMUNITY ACTION



# SOCIAL ACTION Magazine

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THE COVER PICTURE: A great new power line for developing the latent resources of Tennessee Valley cuts across a small, dilapidated farm, offering it new hope of plenty.

MEROM THEME SONG: "That Cause Can Neither Be Lost Nor Stayed" is reprinted from "A World of Song," Copyright, 1941, Danish American Young People's League, Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa. Used by permission.

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# New Interest in Things Rural

By VICTOR OBENHAUS\*

Within a generation from the time of the calling of the first Country Life Conference by Theodore Roosevelt, a great wave of new interest in things rural has swept the nation. The Christian Rural Fellowship with its affiliated regional and denominational organizations; the Committee on Town and Country of the Home Missions Council, the Federal Council, and the International Council of Religious Education; the emerging Rural Fellowship for Congregational Christian Churches; the Council for Social Action's Rural Relations Committee—all reflect this awakening interest in the rural church within Protestantism. From the Catholic point of view reference should also be made to the Catholic Rural Life Conference which at its meeting in 1944 drew something like 5,000 delegates including seventeen bishops.

Far-seeing individuals recognize that the religious conditions in rural America today will powerfully influence religious life throughout America in the years to come. Rural life constitutes the major form of existence for almost half of our nation's population and for an even larger percentage of the world's population.

Shirley Greene's account of the work of Merom Institute and other activities in rural areas must be viewed as a part of this increasing emphasis. He performs a needed service by making us aware of the fact that rural religious life in this generation will require the best brains, the application of modern social discoveries, and unlimited consecration.

## MEROM THEME

The Danish folk tune, "That Cause," is the theme song of Merom Institute. The words to the first verse follow:

That cause can neither be lost  
nor stayed  
Which takes the course of what  
God has made;  
And is not trusting in walls and  
towers,  
But slowly growing from seeds  
to flowers.

\*Victor Obenhaus went to the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago in the fall of 1944 as Associate Professor of Social Ethics. He is chairman of the Board of Merom Institute.

*Adventures in*

# RURAL COMMUNITY ACTION

By SHIRLEY E. GREENE\*

Social change is of two types: that which is like a stick of dynamite and that which is like a tree. Dynamite produces sudden and drastic change. Along with the pneumatic drill, the pile-driver and the steam shovel, it is the characteristic instrument of physical change in cities. Social action in cities tends to be also of the sudden, mechanical, and spectacular type.

Country people, on the other hand, effect their physical changes by the use of seed, fertilizer, sunshine, and rain. A tree is a growing, changing thing. Its power to crack a concrete wall is greater actually than the power of dynamite, but it is exerted through a gradual and entirely unspectacular process of growth. This on the whole has been also the nature of rural social change.

It is not strange, therefore, that many who are convinced supporters of the social application of the Christian gospel, and who are eager to champion the application of Christian ethics to social situations, miss the implications of their own position for the small community. It is easy to see the action of an exploding dynamite stick. It takes more imagination to discern the quiet growth of a tree. Race riots, industrial strikes, bread lines, crime waves and gambling dens are dramatic challenges to the socially sensitive Christian conscience. Top soil eroding at the rate of an inch every twenty years, tenancy rates rising five per cent in a decade, country schools closing for lack of pupils, country doctors retiring in old age with no youthful successors—these phenomena occur so quietly that few catch their profound social significance.

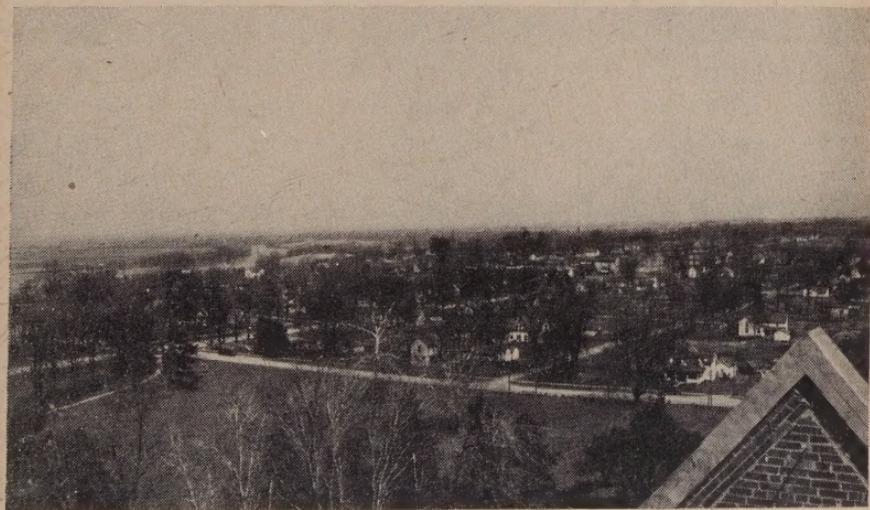
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\*SHIRLEY GREENE is the Director of Merom Institute and a leader in the field of the rural church. He also gives part of his time to the Chicago Theological Seminary, as lecturer and research associate on problems of rural life.

In these pages we seek to illustrate by actual case studies the basic nature of rural social problems, the need for a philosophy and program of rural social change and the outlines for a technique of rural community action. The nine-year history of Merom Institute is to be our principal case study. Several other rural community action projects will be introduced to confirm, elaborate, and supplement the principles and conclusions drawn from the Merom project.

### *Merom Institute, A Rural Community*

Merom Institute is a regional center of Christian influence, sponsored by the Council for Social Action and other Congregational Christian agencies in the distinctly rural area of southern Indiana and Illinois. Just one year after the Council for Social Action was established, 1935, certain people came to its chairman, Dr. Arthur E. Holt, with a concern about a defunct college located at Merom, a little town of 400 people in southern Indiana. Union Christian College gave up the struggle to maintain a liberal arts program among a rural constituency in



The village of Merom, Indiana, as seen from the top of the  
College Hall tower.

the face of the agricultural depression of the early 1920's. This depression and the competition of state-endowed universities, agricultural and teachers colleges, drove the little college into receivership in 1924. When it was rescued and re-christened Merom Institute in 1936, it consisted of 27 acres of campus, four buildings, no endowment and no debts. There was no thought in the mind of Dr. Holt or of the other Christian leaders who constituted the first Board of Trustees that traditional academic work should be resumed.

Their plan was rather to develop a Christian service center for the churches and communities of a region embracing Southern Indiana and Illinois. Through the past nine years this enterprise has grown, gradually as is suggested by its theme song (see p. 3), but steadily as a regional center of Christian influence. The history of this growth in all its aspects would be too voluminous for this article. We shall ignore for present purposes most of its regional activities, its adventures in Christian education, in training youth for Christian leadership, in providing continuing educational opportunities for ministers in town and country churches and in social and religious research. We shall concentrate our attention upon the story of Merom Institute as a center for rural community action.

From this story are to be derived principles and programs which we hold to be valid for rural social action across America.

### *Merom is Middle America*

Merom is located within fifteen miles of the center of population of the United States. It is "central" to our rural problem in other ways. The community is composed of village (Pop. 499, U.S. Census of 1940) and agricultural hinterland. It lies in the general farming belt, south of corn and north of cotton, or to put it in another way, south of the professional exploiters and north of the professional uplifters of rural life. Its people are of old-line, white, American stock. It is a type of the small village-centered community of the great central valley of the United States with the same stores, filling stations, churches

(4 of them), lodges, political alignments, family loyalties (and feuds), as thousands of other communities in this area. It is no model community, set up with government subsidy and hand-picked personnel, nor is it a rural slum. It is just average. It just grew. Our program located in Merom not because anybody thought it was the worst or the best rural community in America, but quite frankly because we owned property there. We believe, however, that the very "average-ness" of the community gives our experience validity for any rural community in Middle America.

### Community Recreation, a Starting Point

The community program began with recreation. It is interesting that among the community projects listed at the end of this pamphlet, at least three (Evarts, Ky., Island Grove Parish, Ill., and Kaupakolua, Hawaii) also began with a recreational emphasis, and several others have included recreation in their total program. This is partly because recreation is a comparatively easy place to begin, partly because the wholesome use of leisure time is one of the acute problems during peace times in village and country communities, and partly because a community that learns to play together has taken a long step in preparation for working together.

In addition to these reasons, Merom chose recreation as a starting point because we found three factors present which must always be taken into account in planning for community action: *1. There was a need. 2. There were resources to meet the need. 3. Community attitudes were right.*

The need was represented by close to one hundred older youth (remember the year—1936) unable because of the depression to attend college, or to find employment for most of the year. They were rapidly becoming a problem to themselves and to the community. We had on our staff, in Ferry Platt, who was also rural life secretary for the Council for Social Action, a man with a gift for young people's work, and I was able to

supplement with some skill in folk games and folk dancing. Despite a somewhat vociferous opposition from a few of the pillars of the local churches, it is fair to say that the attitude of the community as a whole was strongly favorable to a program which would provide leisure time activity of a wholesome sort for these young people.

We did not stop, however, with the young people. Convinced that play is essential to the human spirit at all ages, we arranged community nights for family groups. The very young were cared for separately, but high school, older youth, mature adults, and grandparents all played together. These Community Nights became the unifying basis for many of our more serious community enterprises.

It has always been our belief that our failures are just as instructive as our successes, and this is the point to recount one of the former. Throughout the years it has been our desire to establish an all-round leisure time program which would include folk arts and crafts, folk songs, and folk drama, as well as folk games and dances. Where we have failed to achieve these goals it has been because either the resources or the community attitudes failed to match the needs. In the case of arts and crafts we have never had a truly enthusiastic and contagious leadership which could make a program catch fire. In folk singing we have one or two competent leaders, but community interest has never developed sufficiently to make us a singing community. Once or twice we have made excellent starts in home talent dramatics but the leadership has been too temporary to establish a genuine Little Theatre.

### *Developments in Recreation*

Before this recreation program was very old, we discovered another resource which the community had been over-looking, namely, the W.P.A. recreation service. This service was at that time allocating W.P.A. personnel to supervise recreation centers. All we had to do was to ask for this assistance. We chose,

however, to do more. Many communities were satisfied when a hall had been hired and W.P.A. had assigned a recreation leader. The result frequently was a government sponsored hang-out for the worst elements in the community, either ignored or condemned by the respectable elements. We went farther. Not only did we ask for a W.P.A. Center—we specified the type of person who should be assigned, and got the best man available despite the fact that both his father and grandfather had been Republicans. We also stayed with the program throughout its existence, helping to maintain the moral level and the community interest that would make it a genuine builder of Christian character and community morale.

Our recreation program expanded in numerous directions. One of the most interesting developments was a community roller skating rink. A commercial rink tried to set up its equipment in the community. We argued that if there was profit to be made from roller skating we might better make it ourselves and use it on the improvement and expansion of our own recreational equipment. Also we preferred to have control of our own rink. From the proceeds of the rink which was cooperatively organized we paid for the 60 pair of skates, sanded the gymnasium floor, redecorated and re-roofed the gymnasium and paid for major repairs of the heating system. Now we offer skating privileges to the young people of the community at greatly reduced rates and still pay operating expenses.

This leisure time program is operating at present, of course, on a minimum level because, in wartime, leisure is by no means the problem it was in the 1930's. Today our recreational interests are primarily with youth at the high school level and below.

Experience in the recreational field has illustrated one of our major principles in the field of rural community action. We hold that there are *three levels at which community problems may be solved. Some problems must be solved by individuals. Some demand community effort. Some can be solved only with county, state or federal assistance.* Frequently two

or all three of these levels must be combined in the solution of a major problem. Such was our answer to the leisure time problem in Merom. We called upon the individual members of the community for participation and support of the program. Without them there would have been no program. The community provided the committee organization and the facilities for a successful program. The federal government came into the picture in the form of the W.P.A. Recreation Service to provide a leadership which local resources at that time could not possibly afford.

### Economic Self-Help Comes Next

Our next major project in community action was in the field of economic self-help. 1937 and 1938 were days when unemployment, W.P.A., and exceedingly low standards of living were the rule in the village communities of America. To our staff came Hans Rutzebeck, Danish-born, who believes that the average American community can solve many of its own economic problems with its own resources. He had been on the National Committee on Self-Help Cooperatives which functioned temporarily under Harry Hopkins during the early days of the New Deal. When that committee was abolished because the Administration preferred a program of direct work relief to a program of subsidized help-help, Rutzebeck went into the field of organizing local self-help Co-ops.

After a few exploratory weeks in Merom, he launched the Merom Reciprocal Economy, or Self-Help Co-ops, a fascinating economic adventure. The project was active about two years; it disappeared as the defense boom began to offer cash jobs to all who desired to work. During its two years of active operation, it enrolled close to 100 members, some thirty to fifty of whom became active workers in its various sections—wood cutting, haying, maple syrup production, ice cutting, furniture repair, concrete block making, etc.—and several thousand dollars worth of goods and services were produced and distributed



The Self-Help Cooperative governing board meets at its round table.

almost entirely without the use of cash. Men worked for points per hour, and distribution of products was based on cost of production in points. More important than the economic benefits were the fundamental learnings in economics, in democratic and cooperative organization, in community enterprise, in Christian brotherhood which resulted from the program.

Again and again I saw men coming to the great round table which the members of the Co-op built and recognized as their symbol of democratic unity and authority—men whom none of the four churches in Merom had ever been able to touch—and around that table I saw them having religious experiences. The men would never have labeled them as such, but they were gaining respect for personality, including their own. They were learning the meaning of social responsibility as they took "commitments" and fulfilled them. They were discovering the power of collective action to solve problems that they had not been able to solve alone. They were learning to rise above the petty grievances, prejudices, and grudges which had so often stifled united action. Although they would have been embarrassed at any introduction of theological language, the discerning eye

could see in operation among them many instances of grace, brotherhood, forgiveness, faith, good works, repentance, justice, redemption.

With regard to its economic aspects, this experiment is not cited as an example to be followed indiscriminately in rural communities. It may serve well in a village community in times of widespread unemployment. It is not adaptable to strictly farming communities where the problem is rarely lack of employment. Nor can it compete, in the form developed at Merom, with the cash economy when that economy is functioning. It is frankly a supplemental economy, designed to help men help themselves rather than to rely solely on state or federal dole in times of economic distress.

The broad principles in rural community action which this venture underlines are three. 1. Christianity has not fulfilled its commission to bring to mankind "life more abundant" until it has concerned itself with the absolutely basic economic needs of the community. 2. There are democratic, cooperative ways in which rural people can organize locally to solve their own economic problems. It is not necessary to wait for an influx of "foreign" capital to stimulate economic activity. 3. Adult education is best accomplished in terms of the search for solution to actual problems encountered in the course of meeting real needs.

### ***Farm Ownership Begins at Home***

We can support this thesis by a glance at a few other examples of rural churches engaging in economic activity. A case more appropriate to the strictly farming community is that of the Rev. Calvin Schnucker who was pastor of the Ramsey parish of the Reformed Church at Titonka, Iowa from 1932 to 1942. Schnucker found that 66 per cent of the farms in his community were tenant-operated in 1932. This meant not only a constant drain through rents upon the economic resources of the parish, but also a very unstable parish population. The

young pastor accepted this situation as a challenge to the community statesmanship of the church, and he went to work on the problem. His first step was a thorough-going study of the economic condition of the parish. Soon his office contained the best data available anywhere on ownership, value, possibilities of purchase, and condition of the land and buildings of all the farms in a radius of eight miles about the church. So complete was his information, in fact, that he reports some difficulties in preventing real estate agents and finance companies in the neighborhood from using him as a pawn in their commercial operations.

Next steps included vigorous preaching about the values of rural living and the importance of owner-operated, family-sized farms. To this was added much pastoral calling and vocational counselling with young couples, encouraging them to consider farming as a vocation. Possibilities of purchasing a farm would be discussed in these interviews. Because he knew the facts, Pastor Schnucker could answer the questions young people asked.

When the tenant or the newly married couple was finally ready to buy a farm, their pastor was ready with information about terms, legal aids, time payments, taxes, mortgages, and so on. The results of this program over an eight-year period were startling. From 1932 to 1940 the number of owner-operated farms in all Kossuth County rose only 1.2 per cent. In the Ramsey Parish the rise in owner operation was 26 per cent. Over this period 35 new families had been located on farms with some prospect of permanent status. That the outcome of this type of community action was not merely economic gain is illustrated by the fact that during this same period five young men of this parish made life decisions for the Christian ministry.

This project again illustrates the availability to the local community of federal resources, for Pastor Schnucker frequently referred these young couples to the resources of the Farm

Security Administration which were available to help them get a start. It may be questioned whether the acute and growing problem of farm tenancy in rural America can be solved on a purely local basis. Many voices are raised in these days favoring legislation to protect the owner-operated, family-sized farms. I would certainly favor such legislation, and would hold that part of the duty of the rural church is to work for it. On the other hand it seems fairly clear that we shall not have much success with such a program in Washington so long as the materialistic and commercial policies which are presently being expressed by the leaders of the national farm lobby and Farm Bloc determine the prevalent agrarian policy of our government. By the time the rural churches of America have done the job—the truly Christian job—of changing the philosophy of those who compose and support the national lobby from a commercial to a human standard of values, the need for national legislation in this and in many other matters will be considerably less, because the same changes in philosophy will bring the solution to many rural problems at the local level.

### *A Catholic Priest Leads Out*

Another type of Christian approach to economic life is illustrated by the 25-year pastorate of Father George Nell of the Roman Catholic Church, in the Island Grove Parish, Jasper-Effingham Counties, Illinois. Father Nell began, as Merom did, with recreation. Soon the Protestants were joining with the Catholics in community fellowship. Seizing upon the communal strength thus generated, Father Nell through his preaching, his parish visiting, his community meetings and his bulletin has promoted one program after another for the economic betterment of his people, and for their neighbors. Lime for the soil, clover for soil building, more dairy cows, better breeding stock, and improved roads for the milk trucks have been among his parish ventures. Father Nell's parish bulletins make fascinating reading. There appear, side by side, announcements of 4H Club meetings and First Holy Communion; sports festival and

catechism class; a list of vocational agriculture topics and a list of liturgical terms for children preparing for confirmation, a discussion of stained glass windows and a discussion of a county health project; a Bible study quiz and a comparison of Jasper County with McHenry County in terms of milk production. Referring to his campaign for improved breeding stock, Father Nell laughingly says, "I'm the fellow who put the 'Bull' in '*Church Bulletin*.' "

Father Nell's work also illustrates the value of using all available allies and resources. At the beginning of his pastorate in 1920, Jasper County had no farm bureau and no county extension agent. Father Nell saw that much of the work he was doing for economic improvement could be done even better through farm organization and extension service. More professional leadership would be given in that way, and any prejudice against a Catholic-led program would be overcome. Promptly Father Nell went to work, with others, on the organization of a county unit of the Farm Bureau which today is established and shares in the employment of a full-time Farm Adviser.

### ***Miners Become Farmers***

Ravenscroft, Tennessee, illustrates another type of rural economic problem and the work of Christian leadership looking toward its solution. Ravenscroft was a company-owned mining village of some 500 families. In 1936 the mines closed. Those miners who could find work moved away. About 65 families were left stranded, squatting on company-owned land in what was rapidly becoming a rural slum of the most hopeless type. The vision and leadership of Rev. Edwin White of the nearby Pleasant Hill Congregational Christian Church started these people on the road back to self-respect and self-support. Of their many problems, the most basic, of course, was that of a source of livelihood. With aid from the Farm Security Administration, these people were gradually changed from unem-

ployed miners to working farmers. Numerous other community enterprises accompanied the economic improvement. Recreation programs, hot school lunches, and a health clinic were among the significant projects. In 1941 the community, having studied its problem from many angles, was ready to start a consumers' cooperative. This adventure, which is helping to conserve economic gains, is still the central focus of effort and interest.

### ***Cooperatives in Nova Scotia***

Whenever one begins to look for solution to the economic problems of rural communities, and particularly if one looks toward the producers' and consumers' cooperative movement, inevitably there comes to mind the notable example of work done by the extension department of St. Francis Xavier University (Roman Catholic) at Antigonish for the farmers, fishermen and miners of Nova Scotia. This story has been told so well, in popular fashion by Bertram Fowler and perhaps a little more accurately by Rev. M. W. Coady,\* that we need not present it in detail in this brief study. Rev. J. J. Tompkins, the father of this movement, was sent out to celebrate mass for the fisherfolk of Dover. Because he had eyes to see the responsibility of the church to help men meet their own needs, he started a program which ultimately gave Dover possession of a lobster factory, two large fishing smacks, a fish curing plant, a fish storage house, and provided for the community a community hall, a school plant doubled in size, and an electric light and power plant. Adult study clubs and cooperative organization were the twin clues to the power of this religiously inspired movement.

### **Health for People and Soil**

Another occasion for concerted community action in Merom came in 1940 when our only local doctor left the community for a larger town. We immediately organized a committee to seek a resident doctor. Several early leads proved futile. The

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\*See Page 35.

trail began to get hot in the direction of a European refugee doctor, but other things began to get hot as well. We were advised to canvass the attitude of the county and state medical associations before inviting a refugee doctor to settle in our community. We did so, with the result that one evening at a

Men's Brotherhood we had the honor of entertaining five of the leading officers of the Indiana Medical Association. We had invited the secretary of the county medical association to come and tell us how we could secure a doctor. He brought along for support the president of the state medical association, the director of the Committee on Admissions to the Medical School of Indiana University, a member of the Legislative Committee of the American Medical Association, and the president of the county medical association. It appeared as the evening wore on that none of them was looking for a job. What they told us was, in substance, this: Doctors are dying and retiring faster than they are being admitted to practice. We can admit no more to practice because the facilities of the medical school are taxed to capacity. We have no plans for enlarging the facilities of the medical school, yet we are resolutely determined to prevent refugee doctors from entering practice in Indiana. (It would appear that the medical associations, in this section at least, are serving as protective associations for the doctors in the best monopolistic tradition.)

As a footnote to this episode it should be added that Merom now has a resident physician, a man of splendid qualifications and liberal outlook. We also have secured the services for one day each week of a neighboring osteopath. Discussions are in

### GOSPEL OF NUTS

The great Japanese leader, Kagawa, brooding over the poverty of his people who have so little land for their over-populated mountainous country, discovered that nut trees would grow on the mountain sides. He exclaimed in his humorous way, "Henceforth, I preach 'The Gospel of Nuts.' "

—Mountain Life and Work  
Autumn 1944

progress looking toward a genuine Community Health Center to provide a variety of medical services.

### *A House of Health at Big Lick*

Rural community action in the field of health is also splendidly illustrated by the project promoted by the Presbyterian Church in Big Lick, Tennessee, under the leadership of Eugene Smathers. Smathers came in 1934 to Big Lick, a Cumberland Plateau community of 300. Family cash incomes in the early 1930's averaged about \$50.00 per year. As in the case of the Nova Scotia movement mentioned above, Smathers made the Study Club his basic approach. The accomplishments of the community under his leadership have been numerous and inspiring; our interest at the moment is in the House of Health, built from native materials by volunteer labor. In 1934 poor housing and inadequate diet produced much sickness in the community. Rarely could a family afford the ten to fifteen dollars it cost to pay for a doctor's visit to the community. Families had been known to sell their cow or mortgage their farm to pay the doctor's bill. By 1937, having shared in the cooperative experience of building a new church together, the members of the community undertook the building of a House of Health in a lot adjoining the church and parsonage. An outside friend helped financially. The pastor was construction foreman, but the community itself put in over \$1400 in labor and materials. Upon its completion, the House of Health had a well-equipped medical unit, residence for a nurse, and a center for a health program. Home hygiene and first-aid classes are among the services rendered. For considerable periods, a resident nurse has been in charge of the center. Medical aid has been recruited in part from the county seat, and in part from the Uplands Sanitarium nearby. As with its counterpart in Indiana, the Tennessee Medical Association barred the door to the refugee doctors who might have come to Big Lick to serve these rural people.

## *Laymen Lend A Hand*

Another rural health project growing out of religious concern and conviction is that of R. N. Edmister and R. W. Mulford, Seventh Day Adventists, near Altamont, Tennessee. This community is also on the Cumberland Plateau. Economic conditions were similar to those in Big Lick. The Edmisters and the Mulfords, laymen, having already developed one major community project at the village of Fountain Head, Tennessee, moved into this community five years ago. They became combination rest home wardens, visiting nurses and demonstration farmers. The medical aspect of their work developed as they turned chicken houses, sheds and a big barn into the crude but efficient beginnings of a sanitarium. Here they house, not medical patients, but people in need of quiet and rest. One day they hope to be able to build a regular infirmary. Not content to serve those who come to them, these Christian folk go out into the hills to answer calls for medical and nursing help. Two aspects of this story which make it of unusual significance are the fact that these leaders are laymen and the fact that they have sought and received no outside financial help.

## *Doing the Wash*

A community project of interest to many rural women is our community laundry, launched in the early days of Merom Institute's existence by Mrs. Ferry Platt. There is no central water system in Merom. Wells average one to each five families. Cisterns, and increasingly wells, have gone dry at certain times during several recent seasons. Many women had no electrical equipment. Laundry day in such a situation meant carrying all the water, frequently as far as two or three blocks, heating it on a hot kitchen range or over an open fire in the yard, scrubbing all the clothes by hand and carrying out the waste water in buckets.

In contrast, some thirty families a week now use our com-

munity laundry equipment; about thirty cents a week pays for electrical washer, pumping, heating and softening of water which runs in and out at the turn of a faucet. This comparatively simple enterprise demonstrates that a community working together can do things which the individual alone cannot hope to do. We tried to set up a farm implement repair shop on the same sort of help-yourself, pay-as-you-go basis, but thus far it appears that the men of the community are less convinced of the benefits of cooperation than the women, or else they are more skeptical of their neighbor's ability to use tools and leave them in good condition for the next man. There is a community, Stockport, Ohio, where such a community shop is operating successfully.

### *Saving the Soil*

An excellent illustration of the type of community action which may originate in the local community, but must call in state and federal resources also, was furnished in our efforts toward soil conservation. A survey made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, using surveying techniques which we did not have at our command, revealed a very serious condition of sheet erosion in our county. This information, put in the hands of the farmers of the county, led to agitation resulting in the establishment on our campus of a soil conservation camp. For about two years this camp did demonstration work on over thirty farms scattered over the county.

The three levels of community action were all involved. Individual farmers provided materials and some of the machinery, and approved the plans for their own farmsteads. The county, through a committee of eighteen farmers, promoted interest and gave direction in the selection of demonstration farms. Merom Institute furnished living quarters for the men. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provided the heavy equipment and the supervisory and technical staff, the U.S. Army furnished

barracks and kitchen equipment, and Civilian Public Service provided the manpower.

Although the demonstration period is now ended, and the camp has gone, the interest which was aroused in soil conservation has continued and hearings are now being held on the formation of a Soil Conservation District in this area.

### ILL FARES THE LAND

Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills  
a prey  
Where wealth accumulates, and  
men decay:  
Princes and lords may flourish or  
may fade:  
A breath can make them, as a  
breath has made:  
But a bold peasantry, their coun-  
try's pride,  
When once destroyed can never be  
supplied.

—The Deserted Village  
Oliver Goldsmith

## The Comprehensive Program

Among other areas of rural community action which have engaged our interest at Merom are community beautification, literary society, discussion groups and study clubs, parent training classes, inter-church cooperation, restoration of adequate parent-teacher relations through a Parent-Teachers Association, provision of community movies, community-wide Vacation Bible School, a mattress-making project, installation of a public water system (thus far, a failure), stimulation of more adequate Christian home life, community calendar, consolidation of our two township high schools (also a failure to date), community sale, post-war community planning.

This list suggests the variety of the areas in which Christian action is needed in many a country community today. The best approach is a comprehensive one. The "model community" approach, illustrated by Greenbelt, Arthurdale, Cumberland Homesteads and kindred government projects, provides no answer to these problems. By moving a few families, chosen on a highly selective basis, into an especially endowed set-up, the government demonstrates very little. The situation is not reproducible the country over. Everytime such a group of the "best" people are drawn together all the communities they

leave are thereby impoverished. And finally, the community which thus starts "de nouveau" is no example to a community which has from one to three hundred years of tradition, habit, loyalty and prejudice behind it.

Nor can the one-track solutions represented by specialized governmental or private agencies offer more than a partial solution to rural problems. Farm Bureau, Soil Conservation Service, Welfare Department, Health Service, school system, library service—all these are good, but they need integration and co-ordination at the community level.

Such a comprehensive program demands community organization. Of all the agencies of rural life, the Christian church is the one whose interests and concerns are broad enough to cover this vast range of human needs and problems. It should be at the forefront of community organization and action. Certain reservations to this doctrine, however, appear below.

### *Action Demands Organization*

Turning from function to organization, let us define the "we" so frequently used in the description of the Merom program. The "we" at the heart of this program today is the Merom Community Council. By that name the organization is only a year old. Actually, under the name Merom Institute Committee this organization has been functioning from the beginning of the program.

At the first Community Night program in 1936, an election was held and five community leaders were named to plan with the staff of Merom Institute for other Community Nights. From this small beginning has evolved the present Merom Community Council whose purpose is:

- A. To study and discuss problems confronting the Merom community;
- B. To coordinate the human and organizational resources available for solving these problems;

- C. To devise and promote plans and programs for the strengthening and enriching of the community's life.
- D. To foster in both town and country areas a deep sense of community.

The evolution from an Institute Committee of five elected at large to the present Council which includes representatives of every active organization, association and institution in the community together with the township trustee, the school principal, the ministers, the doctor and four members at large, is a fascinating one but hardly typical. Rather than trace the details of the story, we should examine certain principles of community organization which it embodies.

### *Principles of Organization*

A. Every possible community agency should be enlisted and included in the program of action. That rural church which tries to do the job alone will be guilty of exceedingly poor strategy and will probably achieve relatively slight results. Especially is this true in a community where more than one church exists. The list of organizations composing the Merom Community Council may be instructive on this point: Town Board, School, Methodist Church, Congregational Christian Church, Pilgrim Holiness Church, Men's Brotherhood, Home Economics Club, American Legion, Farm Bureau, Book Club, Library Board, Merom Institute, Eastern Star, Rebekahs, Odd Fellows.

B. So far as possible, specific activities should be assigned and credit allowed to specific organizations in whose field the problem falls, or where appropriate resources are available. In Merom, inter-church cooperation has been pushed in the direction of the Ministerial Association, recreation is going increasingly to the public school, laundry goes to Merom Institute which has the only adequate water supply for the purpose. In other cases special committees or organizations have been created to carry out certain projects. For example, a committee of farmers was organized to govern the soil conservation project, Merom Reciprocal Economy was organized to carry on eco-

nomic self-help activities, a Parent-Teachers Association was organized to deal with school problems, and a Book Club became the custodian of the community's literary interest.

The Community Council is the over-all promotional and co-ordinating agency. The church ought to be ordinarily the leavening, standard-setting influence in the program. Only as a last resort does the Council or the Church enter into direct community action. They should never be afraid or unwilling to do so when necessary.

C. A major problem in rural community action is that of securing widespread participation. This is a problem, of course, in cities also, but in cities there are usually enough interested people to go around. In the country, we often find a few people active in every good cause and movement that comes along, while another small group can be counted on verbally to oppose every new idea, and a great many are indifferent to all programs and activities. In this sense it is true to say that the average rural community is over-organized. Up to the present, no one has devised a formula for spreading participation in community action throughout a rural or any other community. This is one of the major unsolved problems of democracy.

D. There are many resources available to the rural community, frequently paid for by their own taxes, which are often overlooked. Merom has called upon and received aid from the County Extension Service, the State Library, Soil Conservation Service, the Indiana State Teachers College, the Chicago Theological Seminary, the Farm Security Administration, and the W.P.A. Recreation Service.

### *Faint Heart Ne'er Won Fair Lady*

A church or community group which is not prepared to encounter opposition had better not start a program of community action. When we instituted community recreation, some of the "pillars" of the church itself complained that this was worldly amusement. One classic criticism made was, "I don't like to see

the ungodly having such a good time." As soon as we organized the Self-Help Co-op, we were accused of being Communists, although it is hard to conceive a greater distance between two ideologies than the distance from Communism to Self-Help. Of course, the name of our Co-op director, Rutzebeck, was argument enough to convince some that the program was "made in Moscow." When the laundry was first proposed many a local woman cried: "I wouldn't think of taking my dirty clothes up there where everybody could see them." There are still those who are thoroughly and loudly convinced that our soil conservation project was an un-American and subversive activity because the labor force consisted of conscientious objectors.

Sometimes we get discouraged by all this. Then we get to wondering what the community would be like if it were turned over permanently to those who make these criticisms—and we go ahead.

### Principles of Rural Community Action

Here we shall summarize with a minimum of repetition the principles of rural community action which emerge from our Merom adventure and the other cases we have cited.

#### 1. *There is a field for Christian social action in the rural community.*

A minister who had been noted for his enthusiasm for the social gospel in student days went on graduation to a rural parish. To one who asked him about his experiences in applying his social gospel, he replied, "Oh, I still believe in social action, but I'll have to wait until I get into a city church to practice it." Surely this man was simply living with his eyes shut. A list of the areas which should be checked for needs and problems by a socially sensitive minister or congregation in any rural community would include the following:\*

\*For a complete check list, see Joanna Colcord, *Your Community*, available from the Russell Sage Foundation, New York City.

*Physical conditions*—soil and housing, aesthetic conditions.

*Health*—health education, sanitation and medical facilities.

*Economic conditions*—land use, farm tenure, purchasing and marketing practices, credit facilities, village employment, vocational opportunities for youth.

*Government*—adequacy of community services, integrity of public servants, equity of taxation.

*Education*—quality and character of teaching force, school equipment, home-school-church relations, adult educational opportunities.

*Recreation*—types available, moral standards prevailing, recreational habits of youth and adults.

2. *A careful survey of the situation should precede a community action program.*

In a rural community such survey need not be expensive or professionalized. Indeed it is best made by the natural leaders of the community who will be the ones to follow up its findings with action. There will be some occasions when formal questionnaire-type surveys may be appropriate and helpful. More frequently, the information desired can be elicited by informal interviews and conversations, or pooled by a group already familiar with the local situation.

Beware of the common assumption that a person "knows all about" a community merely because he "has lived here all his life." Familiarity frequently breeds not so much contempt as inability to evaluate the true nature of a situation. At this point the minister, usually a newcomer and a temporary resident, can do much to point out factors which the native population has long taken for granted.

Remember that the survey should look not only for needs and problems, but also for resources and leadership. It must also go farther and assess habits, attitudes and prejudices which may make or break your program.

3. *All character-building, community-building agencies available should be enlisted as allies.*

The two most common attitudes held by churches toward schools, farm organizations and community organizations are:

1) indifference, 2) antagonism. Many rural churches carry on their traditional programs with complete disregard of all other social agencies in the community. They seek no help and consciously, at least, give no help. They make no attempt to clear dates, show no interest in developing unity of purpose or integration of plans and programs. They simply operate in a separate world, and if this is called to their attention they may boast that they are "not of this world." Others go still farther and develop positive antagonism to community agencies. We hear them complaining that the school and the 4H Club preempt all the time of the children, or that adults will do anything for Farm Bureau or Farmers Union or Co-op but have no time for the church. With all this negativism on the part of the church, it is little wonder that many of our best rural citizens turn from it to other avenues of expression for their civic idealism. The rural church that would be a successful instrument of community action must approach all secular agencies which aim to build character and community with a warm, positive, and cooperative friendliness. Plans and programs should be worked out together. This, of course, is the great value to be achieved by a Community Council.

4. *A Community Council is a most important asset to effective community action.*

Especially in communities containing more than one church, and even when there is only one, it is wise strategy to encourage the development of some sort of Council which will represent all the varied interests of the community. In the case of a simple rural neighborhood grouped about an open-country church, this Council may take the form of pure democracy, consisting of all the neighbors who can be persuaded to join the group, meeting at the church or in a home. It is somewhat on this pattern that the Ohio Farm Bureau has achieved such outstanding success in its educational program. It has over 1100 Neighborhood Planning Councils, limited to eight or ten families each, meeting monthly all over the state of Ohio

to enjoy fellowship, study current issues, and guide the policies of the state organization.

In the larger, village-centered community the Council will probably be a representative body, and should, so far as possible, represent all active institutions, organizations, and associations in the community. Care should be taken that the farming interests and the village interests are both equitably represented. This sort of Council will do much better to meet elsewhere than in one of the churches. If there is no other suitable meeting place in the community, let it meet in the church, but then let the minister and the church's representative be doubly cautious not to seem to dominate the Council in the name of the church.

The functions of a rural Community Council are, briefly, these:

1. It should provide a clearing house where plans, programs, and dates can be cleared to avoid overlapping of functions, duplication of effort, conflict in dates. A Community Calendar often makes a good introductory enterprise for a Community Council.
2. It should be responsible for the surveys and studies needed to reveal problems, resources, and attitudes and to provide the groundwork for sound community action.
3. Recognizing that most rural communities are over-organized it should discourage purposeless, overlapping, and detrimental forms of organization.
4. It should carry on no enterprises itself that it can get some specific-purpose agency to take over.
5. It should be always alert for specific unmet needs, and seek to delegate them to some appropriate agency in the community, or if none exists, encourage the creation of one.
6. It should cultivate and maintain familiarity with the various county, state, regional and federal services, both public and private, which are available to rural communities, and help to channel those services into its community.

### Role of the Church in Rural Community Action

Merom Institute is not a church. Because there are four Protestant churches in Merom, the Institute has scrupulously

avoided carrying on any of the traditional functions of a rural church such as services of worship, Sunday School, young people's society, evangelistic service or ladies' aid program.

On the other hand, we have tried to be a demonstration of what we believe a church ought to be in terms of community action, though the situation is bound to be somewhat artificial when one is trying to be half of what a church ought to be without being the other half also. It is true that we have more physical plant and have had more paid personnel than the average rural church, but we are convinced that a good many rural churches could easily duplicate our effective plant and personnel if they would practice a more vigorous stewardship and/or if they would unite with other neighboring churches in a larger parish unit of a village council of churches.

From our adventures and observations in rural community action, we derive four basic principles which we believe should govern the church in this area:

1. *Blaze the Trail*—The church will be a feeble instrument

### EMERGENCY KITS OR MASTER BUILDERS?

In our post-war planning we must not plan for short periods or think that we can accomplish anything permanent by placing workers in a needy rural area for a short time. It is the American way to want to go more than twice as far on less than half as much, but the villager is conservative and slow, he has to be shown, and must have his counsellor stand by through his trials through the years.

A rural reconstruction center is a life work always building, growing, developing. The trained leader may be able to train within a period of five or ten years enough local leaders so that he can turn his attention to training elsewhere, but he should most certainly start his Center with the idea that it will be a permanent institution. I have always stubbornly resisted being moved about every year or so by the evident needs of many areas. My colleague, Crowe Buck, was able to establish a college of physical education in India because he refused to be a "rolling stone" or "an emergency kit." In the great needs which will face leaders at the close of the war, even at this moment in liberated countries, we may be tempted to be emergency kits instead of master builders. We shall be forced to do much in the emergency line, but we should always keep in mind the more permanent element.

—Rev. D. Spencer Hatch:  
"My Job is Village Reconstruction," *Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin*, No. 98, Dec. 1944

for community cooperation until it sets an example of inter-church cooperation. It is a tragic irony of American Protestantism that the church which stands in the rural community supposedly as the living body of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is actually the source of more communal strife than any other community institution. Furthermore, church strife, both intra-church and inter-church, is the most bitter, the most deep-seated, and the most implacable form of conflict that ever visits the community. Until we can rise above that sort of ecclesiastical warfare and stand united in purpose and in action within the community, we can hardly be fit or effective agents of community action. The church must blaze the trail. Incidentally, this trail is not only the trail to community reconciliation and rural strength; it is also a trail toward a strong American democracy and a just and durable world peace and order.

2. *Leaven the lump*—By its worship, its preaching, its Christian education, and its evangelism, the church should be pouring constantly into the soggy, doughy mass of our unregenerate community life the leaven of Christian idealism, Christian purpose, and Christian motivation. Among other things, this calls for specific preaching, not constantly but frequently, about soil conservation (The Lord God took the man and put him into the garden to dress it and to keep it. Gen. 2:15), community health (Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. I Cor. 6:19), stability of land tenure (Every man shall sit under his vine and fig tree and none shall make them afraid. Micah 4:4), wholesome recreation (. . . that they might have life . . . more abundantly. John 10:10), etc. It means observance in worship of the great rural festivals: Thanksgiving, Harvest festival, Rural Life Sunday, Home Coming, etc. It demands Sunday School teaching that brings Biblical truth down to modern times and to specific local situations.

3. *Keep the moral traffic lights burning*—The church must perform a criticizing function in community life. Let us hasten

to add that criticism should be positive as well as negative, and it had better be positive first. A rural minister once asked for advice. "One of my leading trustees," he said, "owns an establishment which operates the Farm Bureau Co-op filling station and also the local tavern. What shall I do?" My answer was, "Preach a sermon on the value of farm co-ops before you preach one on the evils of liquor." There are occasions when the church must lead a crusade against flagrant evil in the community. By and large, we have been more ready to do that than to pour an equal amount of moral energy into creating and sustaining the good and wholesome alternative.

In Merom we never attacked the saloon directly. Through our recreation program there grew up a generation of youth, very few of whom showed any inclination to patronize the saloon. When the war boom began, our saloon keeper found it very easy to persuade himself that he could make more money in industry than in continuing to operate the saloon. Now the saloon is gone. It probably will not come back. Let the church tend the green lights as assiduously as it does the red lights on the moral traffic lanes of community life.

Another point should be made in this connection. Traffic lights do little good when located in the back alleys. Much of our moralistic preaching has dealt with the minor sins and symptoms. We have largely ignored the great trunk-line evils which run through our community's life.

4. *Feed the sheep*—Many an academic discussion in Seminary halls and ministerial meetings has bogged down in such questions as these: "What may the church do in the way of specific community action? Should the church sponsor a recreation program? Should the church permit the Farm Bureau to meet in its basement? Should the church set up a health clinic, or a co-op store?" Our answer to such questions at Merom is very simple: the church ought to be prepared to do anything that meets a legitimate human need, and it ought to

be prepared to quit anything it can find some other agency to do better.

When activities are turned over to other agencies, however, the church ought not to turn its back on the program. It should provide continuing spiritual dynamic and continuing moral standards. The church need never fear that it will be unemployed if it fulfills these two basic functions. If some other agency appears which can leaven the lump and tend the moral traffic lights better than the church, it will be time for the church to close its doors, for the new agency will have become the true vicar of Christ.

### *During the War—And Beyond*

While many of our American cities during the war years have been struggling with problems of over-crowding, inadequate housing, and trailer camps, rural communities have been faced with the complimentary set of problems, empty houses, abandoned farms, inadequate manpower for social as well as economic functions of community life. The quality of rural community life and morale has suffered correspondingly.

One day the rural lad who now lies in his fox-hole and "dreams of home" will come home. That day may be one of acute disillusionment for him as the romance of "home" gives way to the sordid reality of tenancy, farm debt, inferior schools, inadequate health facilities, irrelevant churches. The musical query of World War I will come with greater force than ever: "How you going to keep 'em down on the farm, after they've seen Paree?" That situation and that question present the major challenge to the country church today and tomorrow. In these pages we have sought to set forth the outlines of a gospel and a method with which the country church can meet the inevitable stresses and strains of the postwar years. There are easier ways — emotional preaching, federal relief, fascism, among others. But the church can help men to discern and follow the democratic way, the cooperative way, the Christian way.

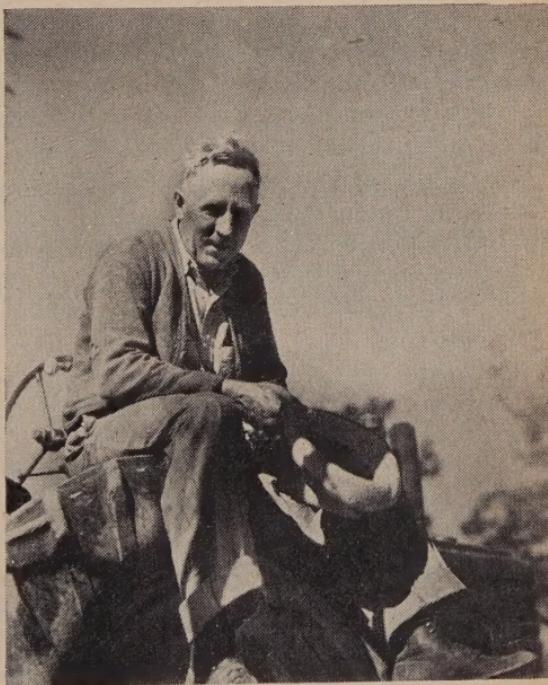
# What the Missouri Valley Authority Proposal Promises for America

By CARLETON R. BALL\*

The magnificent Missouri Valley area is the largest watershed in the United States. Thirteen hundred miles NW-SE as the crow flies, it is nearly twice that as the channel winds. A victim of patriotic agricultural expansion during World War I, it has suffered since from depression, drought, dust storm, erosion, and flood, with increasing property loss and disheartenment.

It has a wealth of actual and potential natural resources in soil, water, minerals, plant life, animal life, and scenic and recreational areas. It has a wealth of human resources, rural and urban. Both groups need to be conserved and developed for the benefit of the whole area. That is a big job.

Individual government agencies do good jobs in their limited fields. Often they fail to see relationships to other programs. Two administrative trends have resulted. One reduces the number of divisions per agency and broadens the objective of those remaining. Another creates correlating units to insure that one program does not injure another or that some problem is not neglected by all. A regional authority combines both trends. There is one responsible Federal agency, and its objective is broadened to cover all engineering, agricultural, industrial, economic, and social problems of the area.



—TVA photo

"We were a long time getting it, but electricity certainly helps on this farm," says Thomas Williamson, northern Alabama farmer aided by the TVA.

\*Carleton R. Ball is an agricultural economist in the United States Department of Agriculture and a member of the Legislative Committee of the Council for Social Action.

The objective is to compel a vast river system to cease destructive and disheartening activities and to begin expending all of its vast energy in producing benefits for the entire area it occupies, and thus for the nation. We strive vainly and expensively to cure our evils after they have occurred. We should remove the causes and thus prevent the harmful effects. We know how to do just that and have proved that we know.

The conflict, or the cooperation, of water and soil begin where the raindrop falls on the land. Only a single authority, with a unified plan and an integrated program, can harness the raindrop at that spot and follow through. Only that can make it irrigate a field, cover-crop a dustbowl, produce dry-land grazing, nourish forests, stimulate shelterbelts, protect reservoirs, manufacture fertilizer, carry commerce, generate electricity, produce power revenue, lighten farm and household drudgery, create industry, arm national defense, produce sea-foods, and provide abundant recreation, and at the same time cease eroding topsoil, refrain from destroying lives and property in floods, and desist from bankrupting an empire.

This is not guess-work. It has been done by TVA. In a smaller area? True! But with steeper slopes, higher rainfall, and more decades of destructive erosion. The bigger the problem, the greater the need for a single agency, a unified plan, and integrated procedures. Everybody gains if the whole job is done. Everybody loses while it is delayed. Why wait?

The many activities of TVA are conducted largely in cooperation with agencies of federal, state, and local governments, and with organizations and groups of citizens. It took 66 pages recently to record TVA's cooperative projects. TVA law provides payments from gross receipts to state and local governments in lieu of utility taxes, thus maintaining their revenues.

Governors, elected by the people, are sensitive to federal encroachment on states' rights and activities, especially in the South. Recently the governors of the 7 Tennessee Valley States declared emphatically that TVA cooperative activities actually have strengthened state and local governments, by enabling them to render more and better service to their people. This is highly significant.

What can church members do? Remember that each pressure group or special interest is organized, coherent, informed, and equipped to make its desires known. Society as a whole is not so organized, coherent, informed, or equipped. The church should represent the public interest, as compared with group interest. It can supply information and leadership. It can "Do unto others as ye would . . ."

# Good Reading

## Exploring the Problem

Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Dept. of Agriculture: *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community*. A series of six excellent community case studies ranged on a continuum from most stable to least stable.

Joseph W. Eaton: *Exploring Tomorrow's Agriculture* (1943). Discussion of the problem of the family-sized farm and the possibilities of cooperative farming  
Frank Fritz and R. W. Gwinn: *Fifth Avenue to Farm* (1938). The problem of population movement from farm to city.

Wesley McCune: *The Farm Bloc* (1943). Its composition and when it does and does not represent the farmer.

Carey McWilliams: *Ill Fares the Land* (1942). The problem of the migrant farmer.

John Steinbeck: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1938). The migrant farm laborer, in powerful fiction.

P. Alston Waring and W. M. Teller: *Roots in the Earth* (1943). Evaluation of the present situation of the family-sized farm in America by a couple of farmers.

## Looking Toward Solutions

Christian Rural Fellowship *Bulletin*. Excellent treatment of a wide range of rural topics in short papers. Issued monthly by Christian Rural Fellowship, 156 Fifth Ave., New York. Subscription \$1.00 per year.

M. W. Coady: *Masters of Their Own Destiny* (1939). An accurate account of the development of the Nova Scotia Co-ops.

Marshall Dawson: *Oberlin, a Protestant Saint* (1934). Life of John Frederick Oberlin, a rural pastor with community vision.

Bertram Fowler: *The Lord Helps Those . . .* (1938). Story of the Nova Scotia Co-ops popularly told.

Luigi Liguitti and J. C. Rawe: *Rural Roads to Security* (1940). Story of a project in rural community action in Iowa, by the head of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

David E. Lilienthal: *T.V.A.—Democracy on the March* (1944). The story of the Tennessee Valley Authority and its achievements in building the life of a rural region.

Arthur Morgan: *The Small Community* (1942). The best discussion of the problems of rural non-farm (that is, village) life.

National Catholic Rural Life Conference: *Manifesto on Rural Life* (1939). Discussion of justice for rural life based on papal encyclicals.

Marjorie Patten: *The Arts Workshop in Rural America* (1937). Study of projects in folks' arts, crafts, and drama in rural America.

Lynn Rohrbough: *Kit and Handy*. The best material available in the field of folk recreation. Comes in handy units at 25c. each. Lists of units available from Cooperative Recreation Service, Mr. Lynn Rohrbough, Delaware, Ohio

Dwight Sanderson: *Leadership for Rural Life* (1940). Discussion of the problems of the professional leader such as minister, agricultural agent, etc., in rural movements.

Dwight Sanderson and Robert A. Polson: *Rural Community Organization* (1939). The best over-all discussion of the subject.

# Directory of Rural Community Programs

Here is a list of rural communities and centers where outstanding adventures in community action are going on, together with the names of the community leaders:

## *I. With church or religious backing:*

Altamont, Tennessee—R. N. Edmister and R. W. Mulford. (Seventh Day Adventist)

Antigonish, Nova Scotia—Rev. J. J. Tompkins. (St. Francis Xavier University, Roman Catholic)

Big Lick, Tennessee—Rev. Eugene Smathers. (Presbyterian)

Blue Spring, Tennessee—Rev. Paul E. Doran. (Presbyterian)

Bracebridge, Ontario, Canada—Society of St. John the Evangelist. (Episcopalian)

Bricks, N. C.—Rev. Neill A. McLean. (Congregational Christian)

Dorchester Cooperative Community, McIntosh, Georgia—Rev. Claudius A. Turner. (Congregational Christian)

Evarts, Kentucky—Rev. Eugene Rainey. (Congregational Christian)

Island Grove Parish, Teutopolis, Illinois—Rev. George Nell. (Roman Catholic)

Little River Farm, Abbeville Co., S. C. (American Friends Service Committee)

Martandam Rural Reconstruction Center, Travancore, So. India. (Dr. D. Spencer Hatch, Y.M.C.A.)

Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana—Rev. Shirley E. Greene. (Congregational Christian)

Ramsey Parish, Tetonka, Iowa—Rev. Calvin Schnucker. (Lutheran)

Ravenscroft, Tennessee—Rev. Edwin B. White. (Congregational Christian)

Shannondale Community, Gladden, Missouri—Rev. Vincent Bucher. (Evangelical and Reformed)

## *II. From secular sources:*

Alexandria, Ohio

Brasstown, N.C.—John C. Campbell Folk School

Flat Rock, Ohio

Jordan Area, Greenville County, South Carolina

Kaupakolua, Haiki, Maui, Hawaii

Monteagle, Tennessee—Highlander Folk School

Macedonia Cooperative Community, Clarkesville, Georgia

## *III. Agencies offering special services to rural communities:*

Community Services, Inc., Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, Yellow Springs, Ohio

Cooperative Parish Activities Service, Rev. George Nell, Teutopolis, Ill.

Cooperative Recreation Service, Delaware, Ohio.